

Serial No.: 10/634,598
Amendment Dated July 27, 2004
Reply to Office Action Dated May 5, 2004

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated August 5, 2004. Claims 1 and 4 - 11 are pending in this application. The applicant would like to affirm election without traverse of claim 1. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nanzai (US 4, 801, 876) (hereinafter Nanzai).

Claims 1 and 4 - 11 currently remain in the instant application and are deemed patentable over the art of record for the reasons given below.

35 U.S.C. § 102(b) Rejection of Claim 1.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Nanzai (US 4, 801, 876).

To sustain a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) the reference must disclose each element of the claimed subject matter. However, Nanzai does not disclose a first flange area and a second flange area capable of accommodating the horizontal deflection of the probe as claimed in amended claim 1. As noted by the Examiner in his response in column 4, lines 46 - 49, Nanzai recites " the assembled probe pin is inserted for vertical movement in the bearings 10, respectively, which are provided with through-holes 51a, 52a provided on the fixture members 51, 52 in a lattice pattern." Nanzai specifically recites "vertical" movement and not horizontal movement as recited in amended claim 1. Nanzai does not teach or suggest horizontal movement of the probe. In addition, it should also be noted that the objective of Nanzai is to restrict the movement of the probe. In Nanzai bearing 10 is tightly fitted to secure the probe and restrict movement in the horizontal direction (See Fig. 3 and Fig. 6).

The flange 206 disclosed in the instant application is specifically provided to enable the probe to deflect in a horizontal direction. Further, as recited in the instant application, the holes in combination with the flange area enable the probe to deflect over an angle and move through an offset. The offset is detailed and shown as 210 in Fig. 2. Selected sections of the specification (i.e., paragraph 0041, 0044 and 0045) that discuss the operation of the flange and the horizontal deflection of the probe have been extracted and provided below with pertinent text underlined for ease of reference.

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[0041] A flange 206 is shown at the top of the center-drilled hole 208. The flange 206 allows a probe held in the center-drilled hole 208 to deflect in a horizontal direction. Since the probes extend beyond the probe plate as shown by a first protruding end 212 and a second protruding end 214; the holes 208 in combination with the flange area 212 enable the probe to deflect over an angle and have an offset as shown as 210. In one embodiment of the present invention, the offset will have a maximum of 0.071 inches. However, it should be appreciated that the offset may vary without departing from the scope or teachings of the present invention.

[0044] During set-up the first probe plate 200 may be moved in a lateral or horizontal direction relative to the second probe plate 202. When the probe plates 200 and 202 are displaced in a horizontal direction relative to each other, the probe 204 deflects. The deflection results in an offset as shown by 210. The center drilled holes 208 and the flange areas 206 are designed such that the probe may experience the offset without being damaged. As the deflection occurs, the probe 204 shifts. The flange area provide enough room to accommodate the shift. Therefore, the combination of the drilled hole 208 which is drilled close enough to support the probe 204, the flange area 206 which provides enough room to allow the probe to deflect and the flexibility of the probe, enables the probe to move through an offset as shown by 210.

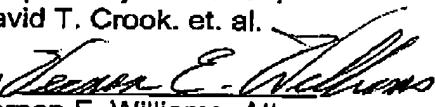
[0045] The ability to deflect the probes and move through an offset, enables the probes to make contact with different points on the device under test and the test electronics assembly. Should there be a need to move the probe and make contact with the device under test or the test electronics assembly at a new contact point; the method and apparatus of the present invention enables an operator to establish new contacts.

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Conclusion

In view of the amendments to the claims and the remarks, the Applicant request reconsideration of this application. In the event that any issues remain following entry of this amendment, the Applicants' attorney invites the Examiner to contact him at (972) 516-4206 for either a personal or telephone interview if the Examiner believes that such would expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,
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